



PRESS RELEASE Arizona State Senate

1700 W Washington Street, Phoenix, AZ 85007

Senator Olivia Cajero Bedford, LD3

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Sen. Cajero Bedford bill to help unemployed gain experience, help business owners, advances in Senate

State Capitol, Phoenix – A bill introduced by Senator Olivia Cajero Bedford to create a program that helps Arizona businesses find qualified workers and helps those on unemployment find meaningful work has advanced out of the Appropriations and Commerce, Energy & Military Committees.

SB1281 would create a voluntary "Return to Work" program to provide a structured, supervised training opportunity, through participating employers, to individuals collecting unemployment benefits. For up to six weeks and 32 hours per week, unemployment claimants who choose to participate will receive unpaid on-the-job training while continuing to receive unemployment benefits. Claimants must still look for work and meet all federal requirements for receiving unemployment benefits while participating in this program.

Senator Olivia Cajero Bedford:

"For those who are willing to put in the extra effort to improve their job skills, the Return to Work program would provide a valuable resource to get a foot in the door while still allowing them to receive their benefits," said Sen. Cajero Bedford. "It also helps business owners minimize the cost of training unskilled workers."

Carlos Ruiz, owner of HT Metals and chair of the Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce:

"As an employer seeking to fill positions and as a small distributor of raw material, I require a level of training for my employees. This bill would offer business owners like myself a useful way to determine if a potential new hire fits into the organization."

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